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ABSTRACT

The whole language approach to reading instruction emphasizes a literature-based program rather than the traditional skills-related approach. The principles and practices of whole language have engendered both educational and political debate for the following reasons: whole language challenges the traditional educational power arrangement, giving more control to students than to teachers; it attacks the basal reader technology, allowing teachers to dominate the curriculum; and it questions a testing hierarchy believed to be modeled after a social/cultural hierarchy. Two assumptions of whole language--that spoken language is directly comparable to written language and that skilled readers rely on contextual information more than on the printed word--are under debate. There is also concern that whole language may not serve adult learners with varying learning styles and that multiple instructional styles must be incorporated into the approach. Several approaches to integrating the skills-related and whole language approaches have been proposed, and increasing numbers of whole language advocates are calling for reconciling the two approaches. Assessment in whole language classrooms has been also sparked debate. It has been proposed that evaluation in whole language classrooms be longitudinal, contextual, and collaborative. (Contains 63 references.) (MN)

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WHOLE LANGUAGE:

An Introduction

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June 1994

Region 7: Tri-Valley Literacy
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I. BACKGROUND

Whole Language has arisen as one of the largest movements to challenge traditional reading practices in recent educational history. It represents a complex change in perception about the classroom, switching from the traditional, skills-related approach to one that is global in nature with an emphasis on a literature-based program. It is an attempt to "free education from the Procrustean bed of hard science and experimental psychology, and to relocate it within a context informed by anthropological and ethnographic understanding" (Reuys, 1992). Whole language theory is derived from an analysis of how students learn to read and write; individuals learn to read and write under conditions similar to those in which they learned to speak. This implies learning in contextual, meaningful settings. Kenneth Goodman, considered by some to be the founder of whole language writes that whole language is built on the constructivist views of Jean Piaget; that learning is constructing schemata for the world (Goodman, 1992). People use their existing knowledge to construct new knowledge from the inside out; whole language attempts to unite classroom-based literacy with real-world, authentic reading experiences, rather than rely on a student's accumulation of isolated reading skills. Whole language is also based on the research of language developmentalists such as Lev Vygotsky, who viewed learning as social-a series of complex transactions between the learner and the world where internalization of social language and social meaning takes place (Vygotsky, 1978). Students must therefore be

able to make the connection between reading instruction and the environment outside of the classroom setting in order for effective learning to occur. Bette Bergeron, of Purdue University, has written a helpful article in which she attempts to define whole language, review its history, and state the types of techniques and strategies implemented in the movement (Bergeron, 1990). She writes that the development of whole language evolved over four decades and is based on an analysis of a multitude of learning theorists (Comenius, Piaget, Vygotsky, Halliday, and Dewey to name a few). It is an enhancement of the language-experience approach (LEA) developed back in the 1950's. This approach emphasized the guiding of the learner towards developing his/her personal identification with experience and the function of relevant language. Schools in the 1960's, such as the Francis Parker School in Chicago, experimented with what they called the natural method of teaching-the belief that reading and writing are taught simultaneously to reinforce each other. Theorists such as Vygotsky, Goodman, Frank Smith and Donald Graves came along in the 1970's. Teachers, reading the literature, began to implement process-centered instruction and contribute to the research and information base. By the 1980's, whole language had become the popular term to label a movement that puts its focus on a meaningful, social, and cultural context of language learning.

The principles and practices of whole language have engendered not only an educational, but a political debate. It is

political in the way it challenges the traditional power arrangement of the school setting, giving more control to the student rather than the teacher, the teacher rather than the principal. It is political in that it attacks the basal reader technology, and instead allows the teacher to dominate the curriculum, making learning more culturally relevant. It is political because it questions a testing hierarchy believed to be modeled after a social/cultural hierarchy (Edelsky,1992). One author writes that whole language is not so much about a method or philosophy, but about empowerment. It is a challenge to a system that uses the mechanisms of a skills-related curriculum in order to better control what goes on in the classroom (Hoffman, 1992). Whole language is emotional because it contests entrenched, familiar views about literacy. In reviewing the literature, it appears that many educators have taken an either/or stance and have divided the issue into two camps: constructivism (whole language) and behaviorism (skills-related). Though the list below may be over simplified, it's purpose is to give the reader a "feel" for the tenets of each camp.

CONSTRUCTIVISM	BEHAVIORISM
Whole to part emphasis	Part to whole emphasis
Favors global learner	Favors analytical learner
Descriptive in nature	Prescriptive in nature
Learner constructs meaning from experience	Learner constructs meaning from skills-based instruction

Skills developed as part of a meaningful whole	Skills learned sequentially
Emphasis on learning in context	Emphasis on learning in isolation
Learner controls the environment	Instructor controls the environment
Emphasis on cooperative learning	Emphasis on individual learning
Favors heterogeneous groupings	Favors homogeneous groupings
Learner is the initiator	Instructor is the initiator
Instructor as faciliator of knowledge	Instructor as dispenser of knowledge
Evaluation based on what the learner can and has done	Evaluation based on predetermined norms
Learning is an evolutionary process	Learning is a building process
Learner has greater control over reading materials utilized	Instructor emphasizes basal readers, textbooks, workbooks,dittos

The differences in approach have been summed up by two educators as a Transmission Model and a Transaction Model (Monson and Pahl,1992). The Transmission Model sees the teacher as the dispenser of knowledge; s/he is active in the learning process, while the student is passive. The student acts as a receptacle of the teacher's facts and skills. In this model, students are grouped according to similar ability, and are evalutated by defining what they know. In the Transaction Model, the student is the center of the learning process and takes a more active role. The teacher acts as a catalyst in the learning process. The teacher may model specific learning strategies, but the

student is responsible for their application. Grouping is mixed in ability, and evaluation is based on what the student has accomplished thus far. Whole language advocates would support the Transaction Model. Many whole language theorists insist that whole language is not a methodology but a philosophy (Ruddell & Ruddell, 1992). Some philosophical principles to consider are: (1) Children must be viewed as active theory builders and testers of their theories; (2) The driving force behind language performance and reading growth is children's need to obtain meaning: (3) Language performance is directly related to language environment: (4) Oral and written language acquisition are parallel and interactive in development; (5) Oral and written language development are directly related to and interactive with literacy acquisition and development (Ruddell & Ruddell, 1992).

Michael McKenna sees whole language as a positive curricular trend that is breaking down artificial barriers, but is concerned for several reasons: (1) The instructional practice of whole language needs to be investigated in a more pragmatic fashion; (2) The widespread implementaion of whole language should await the results of such an inquiry; evaluative data should be allowed to accumulate with implementation; (3) The complexity and diversity of children make it unlikely that any practice will be uniformly effective (McKenna, 1994). He believes whole language proponents do not typically employ quantitative research designs, but instead rely heavily on teacher experience. While McKenna does not dismiss the efficacy of teacher feedback, he

believes constructivism raises serious epistemological issues.

Kenneth Goodman answers concerns like this by recommending a redefinition of research roles (Goodman, 1989). Goodman feels that experimental design research is not compatible with whole language philosophy and therefore is an ineffective way to evaluate progress in the classroom. He recommends a reconceptualizing of science that rejects behavioral psychology and experimental views of what constitutes acceptable research. Instead he sees a massing of case-study research, compiled by teachers as authoritative. It is authoritative because it is based on the interdisciplinary research being done in psychology, linguistics, literary criticism, semiotics, composition, rhetoric, and ethnography upon which whole language philosophy is based. It is authoritative because the teacher, as professional, is empowered to evaluate what does and does not work. When administrators and critics ask, "Where is the proof that what you are doing works?" the valid answer is, "The proof is in the classroom and with the pupils." Perhaps James Hoffman summed it up best: "Whole language is not so much about method or philosophy as it is about power. It is a movement about empowerment-about who makes decisions and on what basis" (Hoffman, 1992).

II. ASSUMPTIONS CHALLENGED

Several assumptions of whole language are under debate. The first is that spoken language is directly comparable to written

language. Proponents of whole language argue that if language is acquired by children naturally through usage in meaningful settings, than written language can be acquired in a similar way. Systematic instruction in subskills is not necessary-such skills can be integrated into the classroom as they arise. Holly Rose Shapiro, a speech-language pathologist, disagrees. Ms. Shapiro does not see spoken language and written language as developmentally comparable (Shapiro, 1992). She cites the research of Liberman & Liberman (Liberman & Liberman, 1990) who assert that humans are biologically specialized for spoken language. This allows children to produce and perceive speech automatically. Written language, however, is a much more complex process that does not come naturally. In speaking the child unconsciously performs the operation. In writing the child must analyze the sound structure of each word, decode it, and reproduce it in written form using alphabetic symbols. Shapiro points out that written language requires phonological awareness; individuals must be able to consciously manipulate language at the level of the speech sound or phoneme. Early childhood literacy activities help to develop this awareness, but such is not the case with all children. Written language also requires a visual/orthographic processing capability with which some learners have problems (Stanovitch,1991). This type of individual appears to respond best to skills-related, explicit instruction delivered in a systematic fashion (Shapiro, 1992). Different learners, different learning styles-"Can whole language therefore

meet the need of every individual?" is a question many educators are asking.

Ms. Spiegel, Professor of Reading and Language Arts at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, also takes issue with the assumption that spoken and written language are equal (Spiegel, 1992). The print-specific skills necessary for reading and writing, such as graphophonic relationships and reading left-right are more difficult than those necessary for learning to speak. Not all children discover these conventions for themselves (Adams, 1990). Children from lower-income families especially appear to have difficulty with this. She also cites the work of Feldman and Teale which differentiates between universal achievements of cultures as opposed to cultural achievements. Speaking is a universal achievement among all cultures, but literacy is an example of a cultural achievement-that is, not something everyone achieves regardless of the environment in which they develop (Feldman 1980; Teale, 1980).

A second assumption Shapiro tackles in her article is that skilled readers rely on contextual information more than on the printed word. Shapiro is concerned that though context is important for pre-reading and understanding, whole language advocates overemphasize its significance. Skilled readers use contextual clues to make predictions, but they do not rely on prediction skill during reading, but rather on automatic word recognition for information (Adams,1990; Just & Carpenter,1980).

Susan M. Church wrote a beautifully candid article in which she evaluated why whole language did not succeed in her school district (Church, 1994). Church, a strong whole language advocate, acknowledged that children with underlying speech pathologies and learning disabilities seemed to be "falling through the cracks" in whole language classrooms; these students appear to respond best to explicit, skills-related instruction. Whole language appears to meet the needs of the whole to part learner, but not always that of the part to whole, analytical learner who needs systematic skills instruction. To quote one whole language teacher, "I ALWAYS work from whole to part." (Freppon, Dahl, 1991). The difficulty with this approach is those individuals with left hemisphericity, analytic and inductive learning styles appear to learn successively in small steps leading to understanding. Those individuals who are right/global/deductive learn more easily by obtaining meaning from a broad concept, then focusing on details (Dunn, Beaudry, and Klavis,1989). Whole language advocates acknowledge that there is always a handful of children in the class who are not grasping it (Adams, 1991, Feppon & Dahl, 1991). It may be that whole language does not serve students of varying cognitive modes, and that multiple instructional styles need to be incorporated. The issue then should be one of examining the needs of each individual and asking not what is the instructor doing, but why is s/he is doing it. This question may become the next major legal concern in education. As more and more is

revealed about individual learning styles, school systems may become more and more legally bound for developing methods of learning that meets the needs of all students. In an interesting article entitled"Learning Style and Equal Protection: the Next Frontier", the authors write that the inability of American students to perform in the global marketplace may be the consequence of a false belief that providing similar instruction for all children suggests that they are being taught on "equal terms" (Dunn, Shea, Evans, MacMurren, 1991). They cite the research of Dunn and Dunn who identified many elements that go into a person's style of learning. These included: (1) environment (sound, light, temperature, seating preferences); (2) levels of motivation, self-determination, persistence; (3) a preference to work independently or in groups; (4) physiological characteristics such as perceptual strengths, time-of-day energy levels, need for mobility and breaks during learning; (5) processing inclinations such as global/analytic, right/left, and impulsive/reflective (Dunn & Dunn, Center for the Study of Learning and Teaching Styles, 1989/1990). The correlation between adjustment of the educational methodology and an individual's learning style as a factor for better performance on all kinds of tests (including standardized) as documented by the Center for Study seems to indicate a movement in the future for school systems to begin to individualize the educational process- either voluntarily or under legal compulsion. Some states have already recognized this and have done so (Texas, Florida,

and New Jersey). Before whole language becomes mandated in the classroom setting, further debate on whether it meets the need of every student contingent on his/her particular learning style must be discussed. Concurrently, whole language has brought to the forefront the recognition that its particular philosophy may benefit a group of students who until recently had been subject to a skills-related curriculum that neglected to address their particular learning style.

The next logical step would be to evaluate whether or not the best of two worlds can be incorporated into the classroom. Before this can be discussed, however, first a closer look into the format and techniques of a whole language classroom must be addressed.

III. IMPLEMENTATION, STRATEGIES, METHODS

To summarize and review, a whole language classroom is based on the views that (1) a child's language is the basis for all reading; (2) meaning is essential for the development of language; (3) the relationship between reading and writing is a central component of literacy learning; (4) literacy activities should be meaningful and purposeful-authentic. It involves a language experience approach, critical thinking and reading, writing as a process, literature-based instruction, and cooperative learning. It is integrational because it melds all curriculum together in a unitary approach. Since the teacher is

the catalyst, classrooms have an individual feel and appearance. A cooperative learning approach may include an emphasis on group discussion and sharing about a piece of literature, shared journal responses, and self-selected readings. A strategic teaching and learning approach might have the teacher modeling techniques to help the students interact with the text by predicting outcomes, learning new words, or using study skills strategies that involve pre-reading, reading, reviewing techniques, such as the SQ3R method. Another approach is that of thematic units. Reading, writing, speaking and listening activities are related to similar themes and content-related topics. Whole language does not believe that children can not write until they learn to read, but rather both should be taught and encouraged simultaneously.

There are ten ideas to keep in mind when implementing a whole language classroom (Teaching K-8, November/December 1993). First, use authentic activities. Engage students in activities that are realistic and would be used outside the classroom environment. Second, use real texts. Avoid handouts, dittos, textbooks, and workbooks. Instead incorporate original documents and literature that is relevant to the student. Third, when writing emphasize the process of writing, not the product. This does not mean that the final product is unimportant; it just is not emphasized. Fourth, allow students to select their own topics to read and write about. Fifth, focus on comprehension, rather than miscue analysis. Sixth, develop a risk free

environment in which students are given blocks of time when they can read and write. A recommended time is thirty minutes. Seventh, encourage reading outloud. This includes the teacher who reads in order to model. Eighth, teachers should demonstrate literacy by keeping their own writing portfolio along with those of his/her students. Ninth, include "mini-lessons" in each session. A mini-lesson is instruction on a specific teaching point such as the use of a semi-colon in effective writing. Tenth, develop integration through incorporating themes. This increases meaning for the student, making learning relevant. One author has called this integrating "cultural imagination" (Enciso, 1994). The purpose of cultural imagination is to develop a person's capacity to use the montage of everyday events and images to inform one of his/her sense of identity and view of the world. One way to do this is to read outloud and ask students to volunteer what they are imagining in their minds-how are they interpreting and responding to the reading. This can be done in written or oral form. Another method is to use what is called a Literature Web (Ross, 1991). The teacher chooses a particular work for the students to read, for example The Diary of Anne Frank. The students would be asked to research the history of World War II, or the Holocaust. The movie "Schindler's List" could be viewed. Geography could be incorporated as the students learn where the various countries involved were located. Students could write in their own diary or journal, recording personal experiences and feelings. Science

and ethics could be explored, as well as issues of discrimination. In this manner, the text takes on meaning, encourages response and interaction, and involves the processes of reading, writing, listening and speaking. It involves critical thinking as students react and interact. Rules of pronunciation, syntax and grammar are taught and discussed as they arise. It is believed by many whole language advocates that too many skill disruptions will hinder the flow of language as well as efforts to develop language fluency (Sanacore,1993).

As previously mentioned, the teacher models the strategies. In one strategy the student puts a box around each unknown word. They then list descriptive and contextual clues that hint at the meaning of the word. Last, they write a possible definition of the word based on gathered clues. Another strategy is the ERRQ method (Sanacore, 1993). The letters stand for Estimate, Read, Respond, and Question. First the students estimate how much text they can read with meaning within a specified time. This is to enhance motivation. Next the students read the text. When done they respond by indicating how the story relates to their life and experience, or how they reacted to a particular character or situation. Last, the students write questions that would stimulate discussion.

Bird S. Stasz, a director of the Student Literacy Corps described an adult education classroom which advocated the whole language approach (Stasz, 1991). He compared it to a painting studio or craft workshop. The room was devoid of workbooks.

Instead, one sees tables with coffee cans of writing materials-pens, pencils, markers; students are grouped around tables, hunched over, absorbed in the creative activity of writing. Adults worked together on writing projects, helping each other enhance their work, learning through observation as accomplished writers who were literacy volunteers assisted. Stasz believes the whole language approach is effective in an adult literacy setting for the following reasons: (1) Adults learn best when the educational experience is designed from the bottom up; (2) The responsibility for the class rests with the students, not the teacher; (3) Adults need to be self-directed learners (Cross, Knowles, 1980). For the adult learner, the reading process is organic as s/he explores print to help make sense of life. Stasz advocates oral histories as a springboard towards improving literacy via the whole language approach. Tutors assist the students in relating narratives about their family and their past, community life and intergenerational tales. Students work on these narratives as an artist works on a painting, producing a final product that they are proud of. Some of these narratives have been bound and placed on display at public libraries.

Authenticity is a key factor in a whole language classroom. In fact the ability to link classroom-based literacy lessons with real-world authentic reading and writing experience is a critical goal of whole language (Kucer, 1991). According to Kucer, the generation of meaning should always be at the center of a strategy. Kucer admits that this is often easier said then done,

and when done incorrectly can cause the failure of a whole language program. Classroom instruction and materials must therefore engage students in functional and purposeful activities that reflect their experience in the "real world." The teacher must evaluate in what ways is this literacy experience relevant to the student's knowledge or interests. Does the student have choice and control in the learning experience? To illustrate this, let an example of a misuse of whole language in a first grade class be given. The students were given the assignment of creating a book. On each page of the book was a phrase with a blank at the end. The students were asked to fill in the blank of each phrase with anything they wanted. The phrases were so constructed, however, that the students had little freedom or choice as to what to put in the blanks. The phrases were also limited in that they did not allow for a broad range of student experiences, but assumed that each student could identify with the experience choosen to be represented by the phrases. This created a sense of frustration among many students who wanted to express their creativity and could not because they were under constraint, or could not identify with the experience represented (Pace, 1991). In contrast other teachers have been successful in their application of whole language. One teacher introduced her middle school class to Aesop's Fables. The purpose and components of a fable were discussed, as well as the context in which they were written. A particular fable was read outloud as a class and discussed; the oral reading included the teacher.

The class was broken down into groups, each group was given a different fable to discuss, and a summary of the fable and the moral attached was given back by each group to the class. The students were asked to think up real life experiences that emulated the moral of each fable. The class was divided again into groups. Each group was asked to write and produce their own fable, which they would act out in turn, complete with costumes and props. Majority of the class chose to write a fable based on their own real-life experiences. The students were given a certain amount of constraint such as the conventions for this particular story type, but they were permitted autonomy and personal choice within the assignment. Spelling was not a priority in this assignment-the goal in the written work was interaction with language. It was desired that the students begin to make the sound-symbol association through experience. For example, a student might spell shoes "choes" or these "theze". At this point associations and understanding are being made: it is the job of the teacher to guide the student further, and facilitate the process. This process is called inventive spelling. The goal is to replace induction through drill with the message that the alphabetic principle is not arbitrary, that it has a logic (Adams, 1991). The emphasis switches from teacher to learner; the teacher is asking the student to figure it out through experience with the literature. Perfection of a final product is not the issue here, but approximation. Approximation is the opportunity to learn a new idea in a psychologically safe

setting, and to try again with planned instructional support and encouragement from the teacher (Cambourne, 1987). It might be helpful to list Cambourne's seven conditions for language aquisition in conjunction with Ruddell & Ruddell's principles and application: (1) Immerse students in language through the display of print and students' writing on bulletin boards, free reading time and personal and public writing opportunities; (2) Give meaningful demonstrations of language in action such as storytelling, story writing and questioning to encourage interactive meaning; (3) Employ language for real life purposes via personal correspondence, oral reports; (4) Allow learners to assume responsibility for their own learning through self-selection of books, writing topics, and small group and/or individual projects; (5) Make feedback to the learner an ongoing process (Ruddell & Ruddell, 1992).

Literature-based instruction is preferred in a whole language classroom to basal readers. The reasons for this are numerous. Literature represents life via language that equals or surpasses their readers' experience. Literature helps to bring past experiences into focus and elucidate the unexpressed. Literature makes language pleasurable, joyful, and entertaining. It provides insight into behavior, and explanation of possible causes. Story character identification is a real, psychological event for the reader. In other words, it makes language meaningful (Ruddell & Ruddell, 1992). Literature-based instruction offers a different set of motivations for the reader

than skill-related instruction. In skills-related instruction the student is all too often motivated by the need to please the teacher, meet expectations, or respond to peer pressure. In a Literature-based program, the student is internally motivated. Ruddell & Ruddell lists several of these motivations: (1) Problem Resolution-the reader places himself/herself in the position of conflict, and thinks (consciously or unconsciously) how they would respond; (2) Prestige-the reader is no longer an insignificant person in a world too large, but has entered another world where his/her interaction with the literature is significant; (3) Aesthetic-sense and appreciation for beauty is heightened; (4) Escape-the reader is permitted a respite from the pressures of daily life; (5) Intellectual curiosity; (6) Understanding self and the world (Ruddell & Ruddell, 1992).

As mentioned previously, the role of the teacher as facilitator is crucial. A good facilitator must be sensitive to individual student needs, motivations, and aptitudes. A good facilitator stimulates a student's prior knowledge. A good facilitator uses analogy and metaphor to aid in understanding. A good facilitator is strategy oriented-this includes a clear instructional plan that provides cohesion, direction, and feedback. A good facilitator helps students monitor and evaluate their own learning. A good facilitator develops meta-comprehension-helping students know when they know, when they do not know, and what to do about not knowing (Ruddell & Ruddell, 1983).

One question commonly asked is how to manage and organize a whole language class. Teachers agree that a whole language class is much more demanding than a traditional classroom (Walmsley and Adams, 1993). A whole language approach presupposes that the student takes responsibility for his/her education, but the teacher is still the facilitator who supports, promotes, guides and encourages the process-this takes a tremendous amount of careful planning. Three approaches for classroom management are a contract approach, a priorities list approach and a blocked approach (Baumann, 1992). A contract approach calls for an agreement between the teacher and the student about specific goals and objectives to be accomplished. In a priorities list approach the teacher ranks in order of importance the goals and activities for any given day, week or month. The list is modified and rescheduled as needed to be current. In a blocked approach the teacher structures the day into blocks of time in which several subjects are merged together (i.e. reading, english, and social studies).

IV. CAN THE TWO APPROACHES BE INTEGRATED?

Can the skills-related approach and whole language be integrated? Marilyn Adams, the author of Beginning to Read: Thinking and Learning about Print, says that depends. Ms. Adams is a cognitive and developmental psychologist who was asked to research and review phonics and early reading instruction. In an

interview with Language Arts (Adams, 1991) Adams commented that the real issue is not pro-phonics vs anti-phonics, but what is the most effective way to teach it. This centers around the debate whether skillful readers process by testing and confirming hypotheses about semantic and syntactic flow of a text in order to minimize detail, or do they process virtually each and every word and letter of the text as they read. Adams acknowledges that phonics is important, but believes that phonics can be learned only in meaningful engagement with print. It can not be learned first, or in isolation. Good readers appear to come from literacy rich backgrounds. Such students are already familiar with print; the written word has meaning for them. 25% of children do not make the immediate connection that /b/ is the same as "B" in Barbie or ball (Adams, 1991). If a student, therefore, has not first interacted with print, Adams believes phonics is useless. Other educators agree. Phonics can be intergrated into the whole language classroom, but only if it is based on the theoretical perspective that is socio-linguistic; learning to read and to write are language processes that are grounded in a person's interpretation of and transaction with literacy (Freppon, Dahl, 1991). This perspective would seem to work well in school districts where the students have not had much exposure to print.

How then does one implement this awareness? First, the teacher introduces the student to print by reading and discussing stories, making predictions, looking at pictures associated with

literature, looking through newspapers, catalogues and other daily sources of print. Journal writing should also be introduced at this time. Next the students locate words they have difficulty with and explore the sound-symbol relationship, making associations as they interact with the language. If this fails, then the next recourse is a traditional skills-related phonics approach-as Adams puts it "without recourse to understanding, the only recourse to understanding is drill." though she considers this tedious (Adams, 1991).

One method of incorporating phonics into a classroom is the analogy method. This methodology is based on studies that have shown when good readers come to unfamiliar words they use analogous words to decode the unknown word. For example a student may use the word "smile" to decode the word "vile"(Gaskin, Gaskin & Gaskin, 1991). Students in this program are taught to compare unknown words to "key words." Key words are words that represent common phonograms or spelling patterns in the English language. Each week five new words are introduced and reinforced through various activities. Key words are displayed on colored pieces of paper somewhere in the classroom. As words are introduced they are arranged in alphabetical order on what is known as the "word wall." Instruction is given in a very teacher-directed, explicit way. Students known why they are having daily decoding lessons. Teachers use the compare/contrast approach to decode words. The group is expected to write a structured language-experience story that incorporates the five

new words. The purpose for this is so students will view the words as parts of meaningful texts. The students understand the purpose of decoding. Each day of the week a different activity is reinforced. Monday is Chant and Check-a writing activity to reinforce spelling patterns. Tuesday's lesson increases students' phonemic awareness and so on. The article,"A Decoding Program for Poor Readers-and the Rest of the Class too!" gives a detailed, lesson by lesson explanation of the program for the interested reader to peruse (Gaskin, Gaskin, & Gaskin, 1991).

In recent literature, more and more whole language advocates are calling for an end to the polarization between the two educational philosophies. Many are calling for a more moderate position that includes the best of both. Still others would prefer to emphasize the strengths of each rather than the points of conflict. Professor Spiegel has assessed the benefits of both (Spiegel, 1992). Whole Language has freed students and teachers to experiment and explore literacy. It has assisted the student to view himself/herself as a member of a community of readers and writers. It has focused attention on three facets of literacy: writing, rich literature, and authentic forms of assessment. She believes that sytematic instruction would complement whole language filling in the gaps of what she sees as flaws in the theoretical foundation. Systematic instruction provides stability and direction that is often lacking in a whole language class-in attempting to be "authentic" important information may be covered in a haphazard way, or missed entirely. "Teachable" moments do

not always arise for many important literacy skills. Direct instruction has value because the teacher and students are focused on a clearly defined goal or objective that is modeled by the teacher. Students are then guided in their interpretation of the application. Direct instruction models and teaches strategies rather then skills, and should provide practice to reinforce the learning. Workbooks and dittos are not necessary to do this-a resourceful teacher can develop a multitude of meaningful activities suited to the various learning styles. Spiegel suggests that "mini-lessons" as advocated by Nancy Atwell (1987) are not enough. Mini-lessons do not provide sufficient information for students to internalize. Mentioning a concept will not reinforce that concept enough to enter it into the long term memory. Direct instruction is teacher-centered in the sense that it is the teacher rather then the learners who make the informed decisions about what needs to be learned-after all it is a teacher's job to support inductive learning by drawing the student's attention to the significant elements of language and helping them to work through their application. Others agree with Professor Spiegel. Carla Heymsfeld writes that rather then teach skills in a rigid format straight out of workbooks, teachers teach strategies. This will assist the student in reasoning and application as they learn to summarize, ask questions, clarify and predict(Heymsfeld, 1989). Phonics should also be included as a reading strategy. She cites various studies which support eclectic programs that combine both

approaches as truly holistic. Kenneth Goodman, in a response to Heymsfeld's article, disagrees (Goodman, 1989). He believes that one can not reconcile direct instruction with natural learning- the two are incompatible and contradictory. (Rather than reiterate his reasons, refer back to the Constructivist vs Behaviorist chart under part I.)

V. ASSESSMENT IN A WHOLE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Another question concerns assessment; how does one evaluate a whole language classroom, especially in a society that emphasizes the skill-oriented standardized test? Whole language is simply not compatible with traditional forms of assessment. Many whole language advocates feel that formal testing isolates learners subjecting them to external conditions. Whole language advocates are calling for ways to monitor progress in reading and writing that reflect whole language philosophy; assessment should be process oriented rather than product oriented. One author has proposed a framework for holistic evaluation (Sorenson, 1993). She advocates three principles for evaluation: (1) Make the evaluation longitudinal; (2) Make the evaluation contextual; (3) Make the evaluation collaborative. Regarding the first principle, evaluation of the student should be viewed as a "history"-a record of the student's development over the years. The work would be collected in a portfolio, similar in purpose to an artist's or photographer's portfolio, only it would

contain a broad sample of the student's work and provide information for assessment. The portfolio should be anchored to benchmarks developed on the basis of the student's literacy development as outlined according to a state's language arts curriculum guide, or standardized achievement tests. Second the evaluation should be contextual; language skills should be evaluated in the contexts where they naturally occur. Formal testing is considered by many whole language educators (and many of those who prefer skill instruction too!) as detached from the learner and the learning environment. Response evaluation is considered an effective way of gathering contextualized information (Guba & Lincoln, 1975). Questions need to be included regarding attitudes, strategies and applications. For example, some attitudinal questions might be: "What are the student's attitudes about reading and writing?"; "What are the student's views of self as a reader/writer?" Strategy questions might include: "Does the student make integrative use of cuing systems?" ; "Is the student able to monitor his/her own success in making meaning?"; "Does the student use prior knowledge when reading/writing?"; "Does the student apply what is learned from the text to other areas of life and learning?" Application could be examined with questions such as: "Does the student use reading/writing to meet personal and school goals?"; "Is the student motivated to write independently?" (Sorenson, 1993). Sorenson does not believe that the induction of whole language into the school system means an entirely new testing technology.

Attitudes could be evaluated by using the Burke Interview, attitude surveys, journal entries, and anecdotal reports. Strategies could be evaluated by utilizing the Miscue Analysis Inventory or similar test (Sorenson, 1993). Application evaluation could become too subjective, however, if based on observation, written products, and interviews. A common criteria for evaluating written material would have to be developed. In order to do collaborative evaluation, the tester must include environment from both the school, home and other environments the student is involved in such as religious activities, clubs, hobbies and sports. Evaluating the student only in the school milieu is evaluating only part of the student. For example one learning disabled student was assigned to a self-contained class where she had a deficit in math and language. After several months had passed, the teacher was astonished to learn that this young lady was a member of the Junior Civil Air Patrol, had passed all the preliminary tests for flying and would be eligible to learn to fly the following year! She had even saved enough money through various sources to purchase her own plane. Valuable data was there in the raw, waiting to be collected that would give a broader perspective of her abilities other than what was being observed in the classroom. In collaborative evaluation the role of the parent is very important, as the primary tracker of the student's progress. Whole language evaluation often comes under attack for being too subjective and impressionistic, but one whole language educator, Bill Harp, comments that the most

significant evaluation is in the teacher's head (Harp, 1988). He recommends that teachers supplement subjective evaluation with an ancedotal record book, and review student portfolios for patterns that emerge over time. Some of the patterns to look for would be if the student utilizes various strategies such as using meaning clues in context, using sentence structure clues, notices miscues if they interfere with reading, and summarizes major events in a story.

In evaluating a reader's response to literature, several educators recommend a checklist for evaluation (Au, Scheu, Kawakami & Herman, 1990). This checklist would include whether the student understands concepts surrounding characters, setting conflict, main events, solution, themes and application. They also recommend the use of reading logs. These logs contain a list of a student's voluntary reading. It would include the number of books read, whether the level is appropriate or not; what genres did the student select from, and any comments from the student.

Other whole language educators take a more "realistic" view of assessment. Of 71 teachers interviewed at a whole language conference, almost all agreed that whole language is not compatible with traditional assessment-that this creates a dilemma for the educator who teaches whole language but is assessed traditonally, and they were almost unanimous in their belief that the testing system is not about to change in the near future (Walmsley & Adams, 1993). One educator encourages whole

language teachers to be practical about the testing dilemma and teach for the test (Harste & Lowe, 1991). One principal recommends that teachers consider two issues within each school district when considering this dilemma: a review of that district's philosophy/policy and record keeping (Linek,1991). Concerning a district's philosophy ask three questions: (1) Are individual needs and growth in learning stressed in policy and philosophy?; (2) Is norm-referenced achievement the basis of education philosophy and policy?; (3) Are criterion-referenced achievement objectives set in philosophy and policy? Linek suggests that teachers who have a whole language classroom and are subjected to a traditional testing structure do the following in response to each of the above questions: (1) Compare the student to him/herself; (2) Compare the individual to a group or class; (3) Compare students to established criteria. The individual comparison process would involve a setting of individual goals with which the student compares THEIR present performance with THEIR previous performance. The teacher would help the student develop these goals according to the curriculum guide, and together both would note progress and growth patterns. Group comparison is when the student's work is compared with the rest of the class. Students would be made aware of the criteria for class grading and evaluation. Writing activities would be divided into five stacks based on fulfillment of criteria; each stack would correspond to a letter grade. Another popular method is a point system. Students gain points for utilizing and

mastering designated learning elements. These points can later be translated into grades. Criteria grading can also be done similar to the method used in an IEP. A mastery level could be determined such as "student consistently writes contractions with a 75% mastery." At the beginning of the week students would be informed that the grammar focus of this week's lesson will be the correct usage of contractions. Mini-lessons would be incorporated into the process writing. At the end of the week students select one piece of writing that they feel best reflects their mastery of the concept for points or a grade.

Record keeping and documentation in a whole language classroom is more exacting and exhaustive then traditional methods. Data can gathered through questionaires, surveys, anecdotal records, surveys, miscue analysis, conferences, journals, checklists, portfolios, audio and video tapes, and projects. Suggested reading and writing surveys would be McKenna and Kear's Elementary Reading Attitude Survey and Heathington's Primary and Intermediate Scales. Miscue analysis surveys could be used. Students could also use a taping system to self-evaluate their reading. The student reads a self-selected text unaided into a tape recorder. The teacher then asks the student specific questions to help in their self-evaluation such as: (1) Does the miscue make sense?; (2) Was the miscue corrected?; (3) Does the miscue look like what was on the page? Does it sound like what was on the page? Why or why not? (4) Why do you think you made this miscue?; (5) Did that miscue affect your

understanding of the text? (Linek,1991). Portfolios could include rough drafts and finished products. Video tapes can be brought home and the student and/or parents can watch and evaluate miscues, fluency, use of strategies and reading rate. Conferences and interviews help document attitudes. Checklists maybe be used to record skill acquisition, developmental skills and objectives obtained, and mastery level. Linek recommends that questionaires and surveys be used in the beginning of the year to assess reading and writing attitudes. He also recommends that a miscue analysis be done early in the year. This, coupled with any standardized test material will give the teacher a profile of student needs as well as form the basis for any cooperative learning that will be developed. A second round of surveys and miscue analysis should be done mid-year to note progress and any direction change that might be needed. The Denver area Coordinators/Consultants Applying Whole Language (CAWLS) have developed an instrument to help teachers collect miscue data called the Reading Miscue Assessment (CRMA) (Valencia, 1990). This test does not rely on taping the students read, but involves observations obtained while the tester interacts with the student and the reading process. In summary, the tester chooses a text, approximately 300-500 words, in which the passages have natural language patterns, strong narrative or expository structures, and includes some pictures and diagrams. The passage should be challenging, but not frustrating. If the reader makes approximately more than one meaning-disruptive

miscue every ten words, then the passage is not appropriate. The goal of this test is to both provide teachers with a framework to understand the students' reading process and act as an aid in planning and to assist students in their self-evaluation.

Most types of holistic grading can be converted to meet any policy requirements. Work can be graded as a 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 (Woodley & Woodley, 1989). If 90 to 100 is an A, a holistic score of 5 would be given to represent a 95. 4 would be an 85 and so on. A holistic score of 0 is recommended for students who refuse to turn in work. Grades could also be represented by color codes. This writer was impressed with Mr. Linek's suggestions. Of all the literature reviewed on assessment and the whole language classroom, his recommendations offered the most viable, manageable and practical solutions. Two other works the reader might wish to evaluate are Assessment and Evaluation in Whole Language Programs, edited by Bill Harp Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon, 1991 and Portfolio Assessment in the Reading-Writing Classroom. Robert J. Tierney, Mark A. Carter, and Laura E. Desai. Norwood, MA, 1991. Psychological Corporation has developed a program as an alternative to standardized tests, entitled the Integrated Assessment System. Ms. Elinor Parry Ross has developed a Self-Assessment for Reading form for college students who desire to be future teachers (Parry, 1992). It includes the elements Ms. Parry believes makes a successful whole language teacher. It has been reproduced below:

Evaluate yourself from 1 (poorest) to 10 (best) on each of the following criteria:

_____ Understanding of basic concepts related to reading instruction

_____ Knowledge of basic reading skills

_____ Awareness of how to integrate the language arts, literature, and thinking

_____ Ability to use various strategies in helping students to learn

_____ Other _____

Practicum

_____ Effectiveness of instruction (are the students learning?)

_____ Group and class management skills

_____ Ability to involve students actively in the learning process

_____ Rapport with students(motivation, cooperation, positive relationships)

The total score was to be divided by 10 to get the average score. The score was then averaged in as 10% of the student's grade. A similar type of self-assessment form could be adapted to students of various ages. Questions would be developed around their needs. If appropriate, this evaluation could be a part of the final grade. Questions could reflect how far a student perceives himself/herself as accomplishing objectives. It would reflect what needs to be developed further on in the year, or act as an tool for the next year's teacher.

IV. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

One of the criticisms of whole language is that it is difficult to define. Whole language has been defined as an

approach, belief, method, philosophy, theory and orientation. The educational literature is not unified in its definition (Bergeron, 1990). In 64 articles analyzed by Bette Bergeron a multitude of terms were used (such as those above), and there was a lack of consistency found in the descriptions of attributes thought to be the focus of whole language. Attributes common in half of the literature Bergeron reviewed were: (1) construction of meaning-the emphasis is placed on comprehending what is read; (2) functional language-language that has purpose and relevance to the reader;(3) writing process-process through which the learners write, revise, and edit their work;(4) cooperative-students working together in learning tasks; (5) affective-emphasizing the a student's motivation, enthusiasm and interest. Bergeron concludes that one can not, from the literature, draw a concise definition of whole language-it means different things to different people.

It might be helpful at this point to introduce a glossary of terms. Whole language critics have often pointed out that whole language is a very difficult term to define at least in a succinct manner. A Glossary of Whole Language Terms has been reproduced below from Teaching K-8 (Manning & Manning & Wortman, 1991) which may help the uninitiated.

AUTHENTICITY	The degree to which the physical, social, emotional environment supports a writer in creating purposeful text for a specific audience.
AUTHORING CYCLE	Students write meaningful texts, engaged in the processes of rehearsing, drafting, and revising. They share their work with one another and respond to each other's writing as an integral part of the writing process.
BIG BOOK	An enlarged version of a regular sized book. In order to recreate the "lap reading" feeling, teachers read from an enlarged version of a quality book.
CONSTRUCTIVISM	A scientific theory developed by Jean Piaget that explains how humans learn. People use their existing knowledge to construct new knowledge from the the inside out.
COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS	The students and teacher work together in an environment of cooperation where they help one another to learn.

DIALOGUE JOURNAL	Students make entries in a journal and the teacher responds to their entries on a regular basis.
GENRE STUDY	Students read, discuss and write in certain genre for a period of time. For example, the teacher and students might read, aloud and silently, poetry for several days, write poetry, and study the lives of poets.
GRAPHOPHOME	One of the three interrelated systems of language: semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic. Students make appropriate relationships between the printed symbols and sounds of language, making sense of the conventions of print.
GUIDED READING	The teacher works directly with a small group of students, and guides their reading through specially selected texts which have sufficient challenges to help them develop and use appropriate reading strategies.

INDEPENDENT READING	Students read self-selected texts that are appropriate for their interests.
INVENTED SPELLING	Students use their knowledge of print to "construct" spellings of words.
KIDWATCHING	Yetta Goodman uses the term "kidwatching" to explain the importance of teachers observing a student directly and informally in order to support his or her learning.
LITERATURE EXTENSION	During and/or after reading a story or poem, the teacher and students respond to the literature by extending the experience in a variety of ways; i.e they might cook and eat food mentioned in a story, dramatize the story, and/or write a parallel version of the text.
LIT SET	A "lit set" indicates that several students read the same book and come together regularly to discuss aspects of the book they are all reading.

LITERATURE RESONSE JOURNAL	Students respond to the books they are reading through ongoing journals entries.
MINI-LESSON	A teacher conducts a short lesson on a topic felt to be useful to the class.
MODELED WRITING	The teacher writes in front of the children and talks aloud about the processes being used by the writer.
PORTFOLIO	A portfolio contains assessment information representing aspects of a student's development.
PREDICTABLE CLOZE	A reading strategy that can be utilized to help a student focus on meaning. The teacher deletes selected words from a text and asks students individually or in small groups to predict the words that have been deleted.
PROCESS WRITING	Teachers and students focus on the process of writing, rather than on the written products. Teachers help writers become increasingly proficient with the processes of rehearsing, drafting and revising.

VII. IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT LITERACY

What are the implications of whole language for adult literacy? Some educators see ABE practices which rely too heavily on sub-skill acquisition and mechanistic exercises as artificial and de-contextualizing (Reuys, 1992). This is believed to be particularly detrimental for readers who see reading as nothing but the acquisition of phonics as opposed to the acquisition of meaning. More and more researchers are attempting to identify how reading is viewed by illiterate adults, especially adults who are essentially non-readers. Do they focus on decoding, or do they rely on the utilization of knowledge-based strategies? Most researchers have found that adult learners generally fall into the first group (Malick & Norman, 1989). However, PROFICIENT adult readers viewed reading as meaning-centered, though they were in the minority regarding their perception of reading. Poor readers appeared to perceive reading as the processing of words rather than that of meaning (Gambell & Heathington, 1981).

Donald Keefe and Valerie Meyer reviewed Cambourne's seven conditions for holistic literacy learning in relation to adult learners (Keefe & Meyer, 1991). At this point it may be helpful to review the conditions in conjunction with how they can be used in an adult literacy class. The first condition is immersion. Immersion is the belief that readers should be immersed in whole, relevant, functional and meaningful written language.

This can be done through the use of environmental and logo print. Environmental print refers to print such as street signs, calendars, newspaper ads. Logo print refers to shape and design of the names and advertisements of businesses. Books of environmental print can be compiled by the non-reader. Eventually the transfer can be made from pictures to vocabulary flashcards. Sentence stems are recommended by some. Immersion can also be accomplished through the use of highly predictable stories, and repeated readings. Repeated reading is when the material the learner wants to read is taped. This way the reader can read along with a printed version of the story over and over. High interest, reader selected stories are encouraged. Learners may dictate their own story on a tape, and have them transcribed to be used by the reader as reading and writing material. The second condition is Demonstration. The teacher demonstrates how reading moves from left to right, top to bottom, the differences between letters and words, how letters can be phonemically segmented as well as how punctuation is used in a sentence and how ideas are sequenced. The third condition is Engagement. The purpose of engagement is to engage the reader with the text and motivate him or her to read. Engagement must be doable-the reader must see reading as a task they can perform. They must see reading as beneficial. They must believe that no unpleasant consequences can occur from this activity. The fourth condition is Expectations. Confidence must be developed in adult readers that they CAN do this. Teachers must examine themselves to be

sure they are not unconsciously transmitting negativism via speech or body language. The fifth condition is Responsibility. Adult learners must see themselves as responsible for their learning. Students should be encouraged to ask for help from teachers and peers; it is their responsibility to complete assignments and pursue their education-that it is within their power to do so. The sixth condition is Approximation. Adult readers need to be allowed to approximate freely and without fear of negative criticism. Support and constructive feedback is a must. They should be encouraged to take risks, make educated guesses. The seventh and last condition listed by Cambourne is Employment. Learners must be given the opportunity to put what they learn into practice through written tasks, reading directions, written conversation, journals, oral histories, and descriptions.

Some educators of adults are advocating that more literature based instruction be incorporated in ABE programs. The difficulty is a lack of high-interest literature available at the 3rd-5th grade levels. Others argue that reading fiction will not help students more efficiently read forms, manuals and labels any quicker. In other words, it has no practical application.

Beder and Valentine investigated what motivates adults to learn to read (Beder & Valentine, 1990). The top four out of ten reasons were educational advancement, self-improvement, literacy development, community and church involvement. The seventh reason was diversion. Reading literature is also valuable for

those students who intend to take the GED. It develops a student's background information; it benefits the reader in helping him/her relate to universal experiences encoded in great works of literature.

One educator, Jane McCabe Schierloh, recommends the inclusion of classic novels in adult reading programs that assists new readers to make the transition from small group instruction to the pre-GED level of proficiency (Schlierloh, 1992). Ms. Schlierloh found that many abridged novels were insipid and watered-down. She began reading excerpts from classic novels out loud to her students. Students began to request copies of excerpts so they could silently read along. The students then began to request copies of books, because they were anxious to see how the story ended. Many of the students saw a relationship between the struggles of the characters and their own life experiences and made meaningful connections. Though disappointed with much of the abridged literature, Ms. Schlierloh recommended the following:

Bronte, C.(1975). Jane Eyre. New York: Oxford

Dickens, C.(1987). Great Expectations. Adapted and abridged by T.E. Bethancourt. Belmont, CA: David S. Lake.

Haggard, H.R. (1976). King Solomon's Mines. Retold by J.Oxley. New York: Oxford.

Stevenson. R.L. (1985). Dr.Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Adapted and abridged by T.E. Bethancourt. Belmont, CA: David S. Lake.

Wells. H.G. (1986). The Time Machine. Adapted and abridged by T.T. Bethancourt. Belmont, CA: David S. Lake.

Ms. Schlierloh also recommends certain guidelines be followed when choosing an adaptation:

1) Avoid information overload (i.e. when too much data is condensed into chapters or paragraphs).

2) Sentences should have a natural, easy flow; they should not be choppy or too short and stilted.

3) Consider the students' background knowledge and level of general information when choosing a book. For example, Kidnapped requires a background knowledge of Scottish history to appreciate segments of it.

4) When choosing excerpts, students seem to prefer dialogue and paragraphs that provide action and insight into a character.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Whole language is wide-ranging in scope, is complex and interactive. It is acknowledge by both its advocates and critics as difficult to define. It is not a pre-packaged prescriptive program; this makes implementation difficult. Because of this professional development is essential when developing a whole language classroom. Several "pointers" have been recommended for putting whole language into practice (Noden, 1993). Staff development is a must for a successful program. First, it is recommended that staff development should occur before, during and after implementation. The transition from skills-related instruction to whole language is a difficult one for many teachers. Second, implementation should be voluntary. Advocates of whole language have discovered if a teacher is not sold on the philosophy, it will not have succeed in the classroom. Third, teachers need to see themselves as readers and writers. This provides an excellent model for the students. Fourth, change takes time-teachers need to be patient; learning to be an effective whole language teacher takes approximately 5 to 10 years. It is not something that can be achieved through attendance at one or two workshops. Sixth, successful implementation requires administrations that support collaboration in the search to improve literacy instruction.

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